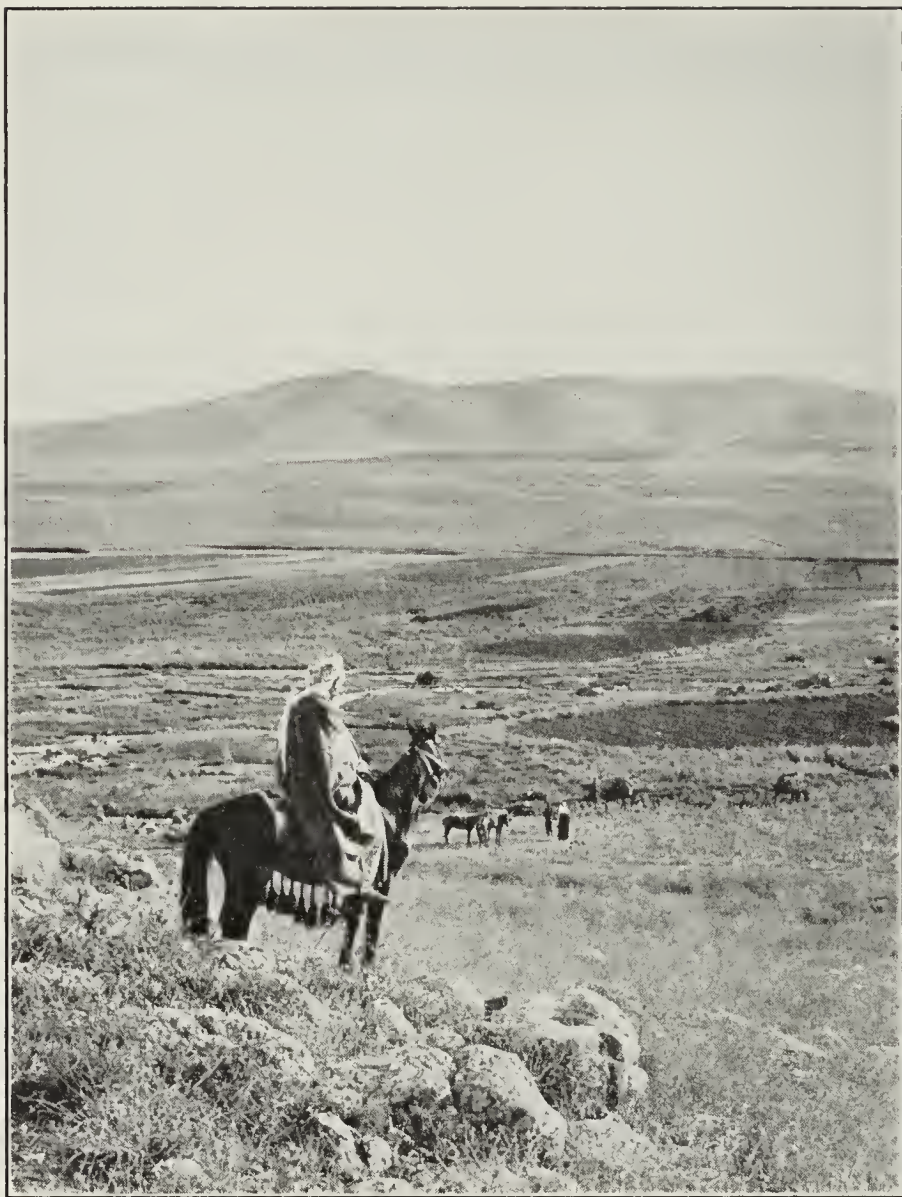


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A SHOMER IN GALILEE

A PALESTINE PACKET

A COLLECTION OF
LETTERS ON PALESTINE CONDITIONS

Published for
The Benefit of the Zionist Emergency Fund
1916

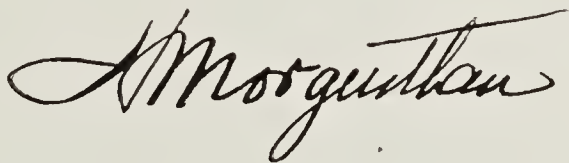
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A WORD FROM AMBASSADOR MORGENTHAU

I can vividly recall the picture which the activities of the Jewish colonists made upon my mind, as I journeyed through Palestine before the war. The older men were contented and industrious. Many of them told me of their prosperity. They embraced the opportunity to make themselves economically independent. The younger men and women, brimming over with energy and the joy of free living, demonstrated what can be accomplished when the shackles are removed and our people are given a chance to develop.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Morganthau". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page.

THE SPIRIT OF THE NEW PALESTINE

BY DR. HARRY FRIEDENWALD

In reply to the request of the Publications Committee I am sending a few extracts from letters written in the summer of 1914, while I was in Palestine. Things have changed since that time, and conditions are so utterly different that it would be difficult for me to put myself back into that happy frame of mind in which I then found myself. I shall, therefore, let the letters give impressions of the Jewish life of Palestine which I love to think of now in these troublous times.

Jemma, July 6, 1914. . . . Shabbos morning I went to the little Shul. There was a large number of men there, but many of the young men are not religious and it is against their conscience to go to Shul. This sounds queer, but the young workmen, especially those who have come from Russia, have brought with them the most radical views of the radical Russians. And yet, with the total absence of any desire to participate in religious services, they lead a much more Jewish life than our Jews. For their life is Jewish and its atmosphere is Jewish. I felt this more than ever last Shabbos. It was quiet in the village, the bustle and life having ceased; not a person nor an animal stirred. Even the dogs ceased barking. In the afternoon, when we were seated in front of the house, a wagon was heard coming over the rough stones. The villagers went down to see what it meant. Who could have the impertinence to come to the colony

on Shabbos? They learned that it was the Russian consul.

Late in the afternoon we took a walk about the colony, and then went to the threshing floor, where great heaps of grain were lying ready to be threshed. We found the people gathered in little groups or walking about, and the children playing, and it was long after dark when we heard the first noises indicating resumption of work. Now this is Shabbos.

Of course many use it simply in order to rest, for they work night and day gathering the grain. It is the hardest time in the year, and they are glad when Shabbos comes.

Jaffa, July 20, 1914. . . . I need not say that such Shabbosim as one experiences here are unknown elsewhere. Even the most irreligious lead Jewish lives at least in public and are thoroughly Jewish. It is beautiful to see how those who are themselves lax respect the prevailing opinion. Tel-Aviv, which we all know is the "freest" place in Palestine, has a perfect Shabbos. No one would dare to go out on the street and smoke. Some one played the piano, but a complaint was made, and now it would be considered a breach of good form to play piano on Shabbos, even by one who would play cards or write in his own home. This gives a notion of what I mean by the real Shabbos. . . . I prefer this, because it is alive and vigorous, and has the certainty of a vigorous future.

We spent two delightful evenings in Zichron-Jacob, on Friday at X's and on Saturday at the Bet-Am, where the young people meet and have a splendid time. We found them somewhat depressed because in a few days thirty-



THE ARCHITECT'S HOUSE IN ZICHRON-JACOB

four of their number must present themselves for army service. But in spite of this they were quite happy, and showed their courage and enthusiasm in several speeches. They played games and sang, and altogether I am in love with them. I told A..... that I admired the products of their work and their farms and their orchards. But the best products I have seen in Palestine are these boys and girls, healthy, strong, fine looking and vigorous specimens of Jewish manhood and womanhood. I hope to live to see a great many more of them. Unfortunately a number of young men have left the colonies and gone to foreign lands. But I hear that they are coming back: "They hear the East a-calling, and can't 'eed nothing else." Many of them are good-

looking. But better than their looks and their strength and their courage is that Jewish spirit, the Maccabaeon spirit, the love of their land and their people—for that is the main-spring of all their activity and all their thoughts and hopes. I am sure that we shall hear great things from these men and women some day. They will show the world what straight-backed, courageous spirited Jews are, and what they can do.

Rehobot, July 24, 1914. . . . The weather is warm; it is hot in the sun, but not more so than at home, and altogether quite comfortable. The inn at this little place is good and clean, and the people we meet are fine specimens. It is wonderful to hear the experiences of the early settlers, how they lived in hovels and cellars in which there was water even in summer. My friend Mr. E....., his family, and another man and his family were together in Vadi el-Hanin. His comrade was murdered by the Arabs, and E..... was left to care for both families. One of his children fell into the water in the underground hole in which they lived for a while, and was almost drowned. Another child got sore eyes, and there was no physician. So Mrs. E..... carried the little one in her arms to Rishon every day, (it takes an hour and a half in a wagon now,) and had to stay out in the hot sun, because the people there were afraid of the disease. It is marvelous to listen to these tales and to look into the sturdy faces, and to see the deep graven furrows, the evidence of the hard times and the arduous experiences through which these people have passed. I have a profound admiration and respect for

them. I feel a deep humility when I gaze at these pioneers and realize that they are whole-hearted Jews, real Jews in every sense. I wish I could be with them more, and could contribute something to the great work of building up a true Jewish community. I fully realize the difficulties and even the dangers before which we stand, and I know there is not a single thing which we have done which is without serious defects; and yet I feel assured that there are great possibilities within our reach, and that the future depends chiefly on our own efforts and the wisdom with which we proceed.

August 3, 1914. . . . I went to the Wailing Wall on Tisha be-Ab. They say that the services used to be more impressive, but that fewer of the old people come now as a result of recent disturbances. Still there were a number of the old school sitting on the ground and reading prayers by the light of little candles and lamps; and in the background there stood a number of shomrim from the colonies. The moon was shining brightly and from time to time one caught snatches of the plaintive melodies. But I was not able to get into the proper "Stimmung", the feeling which I had expected, and which I should have liked to have. It left me rather cold. Perhaps I could not divest myself of the conviction that by prayer alone we cannot accomplish our restoration. I do not know whether we modern people have lost the faculty of profound devotion, the "Kavanah" of our fathers. Not by prayer alone, but by sacrifice and hard work and intelligent effort must we seek to build up the ruins and remove the waste. And yet, standing here two

thousand five hundred years after the destruction of the first Temple, at the sight of the ruin of that which was the glory of our land and the inspiration of the world, one cannot but be impressed by the wonder and the miracle of the preservation of this little people, through all the vicissitudes that they have gone during the ages; of their still living and having energy to work, and devotion to pray, of their still having the hope to revive and again to take a place of honor in the society of nations. The great, the massive blocks which form the base of the "Kotel ha-Maaravi", the Western wall, are still there, strong, unshaken by time and by earthquakes, an emblem of the strength that is enduring. The stranger passes by without interest and smiles at the spectacle of Jews praying beside the wall and kissing its rough surface. But the wall has endured, and the Jewish people are in some respects like it, strong, and enduring, and despised. But they are also like the Eastern wall which supports the great "Place of the Omar Mosque", and helps to bear up this temple of a strange culture, just as the Jews throughout the world help to build up and support the various cultures of strange peoples, who hold them under subjection.

Let us hope that some day our people will again live its own life, build up its own culture, be a pride to its sons and daughters, and a source of benefit and inspiration to all the world.

. . . BUT MY HEART IS IN THE EAST

BY DR. B. MOSSINSOHN

The blare of trumpets, the tumult of warfare! The whole world is facing destruction. The civilization of centuries is being crushed and trampled in the dust. It seems as though Satan had confused the peoples and turned them blindly one against the other, he himself standing by and looking on their misfortune with a malicious smile. In a minute they destroy that which generations have built up. Out of this universal destruction there issues a scarcely perceptible moan, the moan of the builders. They would fain defend with their lives that which is infinitely dear to them; but they can do no more than huddle together and gaze despairingly on the delicate blossom whose growth and development they have so lovingly furthered, the blossom which they have tended with the sweat of their brow, the blood of their heart, and the marrow of their bone. They of whom I speak are the children of the eternal people, who have gone back to the land of their fathers, to erect a new edifice on its ruins, and to imbue its ancient culture with new life.

Far from the bustle and turmoil of Europe, on the shores of the blue Mediterranean, under the canopy of the azure heavens, in the hills and valleys of their ancient land, they had sought to solve the problem of their people, and to find rest for their own souls. They knew nothing of the envy and hatred which blind the eyes of men and provoke them to bloodshed and destruction; and so they stood perplexed and bewildered. "Why all this waste

and misery? What end does it serve? And what is the use of building, of building and creating?"

But on them too the storm has broken. Waves of blood dash against their shores, and pollute with crimson spray the work of their hands. The Yishub and its institutions are in danger. From all sides they hear the voice of the Jews in the Diaspora, urging that they give up the fight, that they abandon their possessions, and seek shelter, at least for a short time, until the tempest will have blown over. Egypt is so near! And boats are to be had for the asking! And in Egypt the flesh-pots are still to be found. But though the refuge is so near and the people in the Diaspora council flight, the builders of the Yishub stand firm. They draw closer to one another, and risk their lives to protect the fruit of their labor. But they cannot repress the moan which bursts from their aching hearts. This moan is not an expression of weakness, nor are their outstretched hands pleading for alms; it is a wail of anguish caused by the peril of everything which is precious and holy; it is a proclamation to the Jews of the Diaspora that their future is hanging in the balance. It conveys to them the murmur of the new life which is transfiguring the land of silence and desolation, and tells of the glorious vision to the realization of which the builders have unquestioningly devoted their lives.

And I, a wanderer on the face of the earth, perceive that this moan has found an echo in the hearts of the children of the Diaspora. From time to time I see a curious stirring in the dormant masses when the name of Erez Israel is mentioned. It seems to recall ancient

memories, the hopes of thousands of years, perhaps, too, the dreams of youth. Their breasts commence to heave and their hearts throb violently, and tears spring to their eyes, as if the magic of that name were waking them from the long sleep of the Exile. The prisoner strains at his shackles and stretches his flabby sinews. The chains which bind him reverberate; but it is a far call from the clanging of the chains to the final liberation.

The people have risen to the point of making certain sacrifices. They count out how much they gave yesterday, how much they gave in the past, and how much they can safely spare in the future. They jot down what they gave for this purpose, and what for that. . . . But to real sacrifice, to the state of mind in which one soars far above the trivialities of life, to the exaltation of the spirit which ennobles the soul, and gives it, if only for a moment, a glimpse of eternity—no! to this sacrifice the people have not risen! And yet the dreamers of dreams in Palestine expect such a sacrifice, a sacrifice which will not only save the Yishub, but will moreover purify the hearts of the Jews in America, and unite the whole people for its ultimate deliverance and spiritual redemption.

And I am a wanderer on the face of the earth! And there comes to my mind the recollection of another conflict, which took place there, in the land of our past and of our future, without the clash of swords or the ringing of spears; the conflict of languages. The Jewish organizations outside of Palestine had showered gold on the Yishub, and the drops of golden rain, falling side by side on the ground, formed into chains, chains of the spirit. Each organization

brought with it the language and the culture of its own land, or rather, not the culture, but its outward glamor. The Yishub was too young and frail to reject the help of these organizations, and believed, in its simplicity, that the true spirit of the land was invincible and bound to triumph.

The New Yishub had created its own schools, in which the Hebrew language had blossomed anew, fragrant with the essence of the mountains and valleys, of the golden rays of the sun, of the splashing of the ripples of the Jordan. The successful revival of the ancient national culture would, as they hoped, convince their benefactors that they were in the right. And the benefactors smilingly encouraged them as long as it was to their interest to do so. So the Yishub overlooked their vagaries, and generously condoned their sins.

And then the momentous time was at hand when the fairest dream of the Yishub was to be realized—a great technological institute was to be established. A technological institute! How sweetly these words sounded in the ears of all Palestine! There were a few who demurred because the organization which had given the funds insisted on seeing its own flag waving over the handsome edifice; but their protestations were lost in the chorus of approbation which resounded from all sides. The best workers and most faithful friends of the Yishub gave themselves heart and soul to the upbuilding of the new institute. We were tense with expectation, and our hearts overflowed with joy and gratitude. And then came the blow which in a moment dashed our fondest hopes; here too, into the very midst of the Yishub, a

strange language and a strange culture were to be forcibly introduced; and our erstwhile co-workers sat back and laughed at our discomfiture and our despair, and jeered at those who had dreamed of a Hebrew resurrection.

Religion and physical training, they munificently assured us, were to be taught in Hebrew. What was to be done? The real builders of the Yishub, the idealists, were forced to retreat from the battle-field and to leave the gross materialists, the purveyors of money, in full control. But this defeat was only temporary. The ire of the Yishub was aroused, and the real struggle was only to begin.

The conflict was ostensibly a mere haggling over the number of subjects which were to be taught in Hebrew, but in reality it had a far deeper significance. Two different worlds were ranged opposite one another on the battle-field, "they", and "we". "They" had come as the representatives of their country to make unscrupulous use of the builders in the land of their fathers, in order to force the culture of a strange people on us by insidious means. What mattered it that we had come there to revive the glorious culture of our ancestors, so that our posterity might be the free children of a free land? "They" took for their maxim: "Anything is good enough for our poor unfortunate co-religionists in the east. Let them be thankful for the crumbs we throw to them." And "we" said: "Nothing is too good for the first generation of the redemption! We gladly give the best of our strength, the very marrow of our bones, so that they may flourish and prosper." "They" reiterated: "But

it was we who gave the money, and therefore you have no right to interfere." And "we" cried to them in turn: "Keep your gold! We will not sell the souls of our children."

The whole Yishub took part in the conflict, from the teachers at their desks to the working-people, pickaxe in hand, who had hewn the new language out of the very rocks of the Land of Israel. Even the patient and long-suffering farmers remembered how they had been bound by the golden chains of their "protectors", and eagerly joined the ranks.



THE HEBREW GYMNASIA "HERZLIA" IN TEL-AVIV

"Our own schools for our own children!" Such was the watchword of the day. And it was the Yishub, feeble and poor in resources, that provided the necessary means

for carrying on the conflict. I shall always remember a certain meeting in the hall of the Hebrew Gymnasia in Jaffa, where the teachers of the Gymnasia and of the Girls' School, as well, as several men connected with pedagogic activities had gathered to discuss the situation with the teachers of the "Esra". It was, of course, indisputable that these last would have to resign their positions and go on strike in order to voice their protest against the introduction of a foreign language. But how were they to live? This seemingly unanswerable question plunged the whole assembly into gloom. Suddenly one of the men rose to his feet and cried: "We can share our bread with them!" And nothing further was said. The problem had been successfully solved, and the situation was saved. Most of the teachers agreed to contribute one half of their salaries to the fund, although the whole barely sufficed to keep the wolf from the door. But they were all oblivious of this consideration; and with the same unquestioning strength of purpose the "Esra" teachers gave up their positions without a murmur.

And it was on this foundation of enthusiasm and courage that the new Hebrew schools were erected. The words which had been spoken at that memorable gathering re-echoed throughout all Palestine. "We can share our bread with them!" The townspeople and the farmers, the laborers and the schoolchildren outdid one another in their eagerness to help support the teachers who had resigned their positions.

Then for the first time I grasped the significance of a national sacrifice; then indeed did I realize what it means

to form part of a living nation, and to remain serene and happy even in times of stress.

Soon we were assisted by sympathizers in other countries, notably in those which are now submerged in blood and groaning under the leaden yoke of oppression. We welcomed this help and rejoiced to find that our battle-cry had found an echo in the hearts of the faithful in the Diaspora. And yet we were almost sorry that the renunciation which had filled us with pride and exultation was no longer necessary.

And then came the great war. Life in Palestine was at a standstill. Teachers and pupils were menaced by starvation and danger of death. But the schools remained open, and the air was filled with the prattle of children—and the voice of the children is the living voice, proof positive and indubitable that our labor has not been in vain.

The bell of the Gymnasia is still ringing—the Yishub still persists. “Come what may, we will not desert our post!” These words resound every morning through the streets of Tel-Aviv. And in Jerusalem too they hearken to the bell of the Hebrew Seminary, and are filled with renewed courage by its cheering tones. The ringing of the bells is wafted over the boundless ocean and lingers in my ears. And I hearken to its notes, and weave them into the fabric of my dream. Grant me a moment’s peace! Let me drink from the fountain of life!

. . . And I am a wanderer on the face of the earth!

THE TEST OF EFFICIENCY OF THE NEW YISHUB

BY HARRY KAPLAN

There was no war cloud on the horizon when we arrived in Jaffa in December, 1913. Everything was busy and prospering. In Tel-Aviv as many as twenty dwellings were building at one time, but when we tried to rent one, we found that they had all been spoken for ahead. It was not unusual to see a family move into a house before the doors and windows were in. We had to put up at a private hotel for ten weeks before we could get an option on a dwelling. Naturally this great demand caused the price of food and rents to jump high, so high that by Shevuot a number of Gymnasia students put up tents on the sand dunes near Hevrah-Hadashah, and lived in them because they would not pay the high rent that was charged.

People came to Palestine from all over, some as tourists, some to buy land, some to develop industries and settle there. For Pesach there were such numbers of new people that it was impossible to accommodate them. When we pointed out these facts to the opponents of the New Yishub, they would say, "Things are all right as long as everything runs smoothly, and every one looks forward to a bright future; but these people are loosely thrown together. They come from diverse conditions, and are the products of different cultures. If anything unforeseen happens it will all burst like a soap-bubble. Such people would not be efficient in handling emergencies."



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THE HARBOR OF JAFFA

News came that Austria had declared war on Serbia. We paid small attention to this, for they were far away and did not concern us materially. Even when Russia and Germany intervened we shrugged our shoulders and went on working. But when England declared war, and a moratorium was suddenly put on all the banks under English, French, and German control—and these were the only powerful financial institutions in Palestine—then we felt it pretty keenly. Money we could not get, there were no boats to bring us food and call for our prod-

ucts, and the Turkish government started to mobilize. Then we saw that the war was coming to us too.

For a few days we were dismayed and paralyzed. But soon we began to organize. It was not necessary to call mass meetings, nor to urge people to help us, nor to appeal to their patriotic sentiments. We got together quietly and each one of us put himself in the place for which he was most fitted. We formed Le-Hacalat-Hamachber which was divided into committees and different departments. There was a department of loans, Ha-Milvah, which was of the greatest assistance to people who had houses, papers, and valuables, as they could give a security for the money they received, and so were not compelled to accept charity. There was a department which bought food and the other necessities of life.

As with one or two exceptions all private undertakings had stopped, a department of public work was created, so that the people could work for their money instead of receiving it as charity. There was also the Vaad ha-Lechem, which rented bake-ovens, and with the grain and flour that the buying department had procured they baked bread and sold it at cost price. Then the Vaad ha-Hanut opened stores in three districts at which food was sold at cost price plus 10% for losses and running expenses. These stores not only helped the population, but regulated the prices for the store-keepers who had begun to charge exorbitantly for their goods. A cheap restaurant was organized, which furnished a wholesome meal for three cents, as well as a tea-room run by the ladies of Tel-Aviv, and another restaurant which

furnished meals at cost price. With the exception of this last-named restaurant all these organizations were taken over by the American Relief Committee when Turkey entered the war.

The Anglo-Palestine Bank had become the most powerful financial institution in Palestine, perhaps not so much in capital as in the number of depositors. It felt its responsibility to its small depositors and tried to help them as well as it could. Of course the bulk of its money was in London, and as it was not able to receive gold from there because of the war, and had been ordered not to pay out any gold, the directors worked out a system to help their depositors without violating their corporation laws. They issued certified checks in small amounts in proportion to the individual deposits of the creditors. It is to be remarked that not only the Jews, but also the Arabs and Germans, accepted these checks as money, and preferred them to checks issued by other banks.

In this small space it is impossible to give details of other organizations which sprang up after the beginning of the war. I may say, having worked in several of these committees, that I never saw better nor abler people than my co-workers, nor any who worked in more perfect harmony. And not only were none of them getting paid for their work, but they had the worry of providing for their own families, who were in just as precarious a condition as the rest of the population. Nevertheless they stuck to their tasks from morning till night.

Moreover, although the Old and the New Yishub were not on friendly terms before the war, yet when the mail

stopped bringing the monthly Halukkah money from Russia, Galicia, Hungary, Germany and England, and the Halukkah people were penniless and on the verge of starvation, the New Yishub immediately began to care for them as well as their own.

To cope with such a calamity, and with as many thousands of penniless people our funds were insufficient, and we could not begin to do what we should have done. That is why some people, ignorant of actual conditions, have criticized our work and continue to do so. But those of us who were there know that the people of the New Yishub not only gave their time and their energy, but went down deep into their pockets at a time when they themselves were facing need. I know some of them who gave 300 and 400 francs for the fund, and are now in the direst need. If the Provisional Committee had not sent their aid in time perhaps the greater part of the Jewish population of Palestine would have perished.

Of one thing we can have no doubt: the New Yishub is efficient and able to handle its affairs; it has stood the test beyond expectation.

TO PALESTINE WITH THE U. S. S. "VULCAN"

BY LOUIS H. LEVIN

Beirut, April 20, 1915. . . . The plague of locusts, which I first heard of in Egypt, I saw in full operation to-day. I have never witnessed anything like it. The air was black with them, and the ground covered with their droppings. I have been told that all the wheat and a good many other crops are gone. Misfortunes never come singly.

Jaffa, April 26, 1915. . . . I have now been in Jaffa since last Wednesday, but our cargo has not yet been discharged. We are waiting for certain preliminaries to be arranged. . . . The city proper is an Oriental-looking place, with narrow and roughly paved streets, and a population that is picturesque for all its rags and tatters. Here we see the patient and willing little donkey, and the camel surprising you by the wonderful adaptation of its anatomy and powers to the task demanded of it. But they are not the only ones to carry burdens. The Arab can carry a startlingly heavy load. He takes it on his back, puts a rope about it, and brings the rope about his forehead, and away he goes, as slow and as sure-footed and as heavily laden as the camel. And all for a few great big coppers.

There are, Jewishly speaking, two parts to Jaffa—the old city and the suburb known as Tel-Aviv. The latter portion of the town is a modern city, with nicely paved streets and some really fine houses, and a population that is quite different from anything that you will meet elsewhere. Hebrew is the universal means of communication,

and the little children prattle it in the street charmingly. There is a very friendly spirit abroad, and all seem to fraternize in a way that is unknown in the Western world, and at the same time the fraternization partakes of nothing of that Jewish familiarity which we are wont to criticise. In the evening, say at six o'clock, you will find nearly the whole population promenading in the cool air—for it is cool here in the evening—and the scene is one of great attractiveness. There is really something of the idyllic in it, and they tell me that the scene was even more beautiful before the war sent away some 500 of the 2,000 population of the place.



U. S. S. "TENNESSEE" TAKING ON REFUGEES IN JAFFA

Before the war there were many Jewish tourists, and the influx of people of means was getting larger every year. Many improvements were contemplated, a large moving-picture house had just been completed, a boulevard leading to the sea, where bathing houses were to have been erected had been planned, a modern hotel for visitors, and a new synagogue—all these and more were in contemplation, but everything is at a standstill now.



PUPILS OF THE HEBREW GYMNASIA

I visited the schools to-day, and the Girls' School is really a fine institution. It had 500 girls before the war,

but now it has only 300. The girls look up-to-date and are attractive in every way. Many of them are the children of rich Russian parents who have sent them here to get the education they cannot get at home. The same is true of the Gymnasia, whose attendance of 800 has been reduced to 500. This is also a fine school, and the students are a particularly fine body of children. . . . We found in the Gymnasia three Arab boys who were learning Hebrew in order to get an education, and in the Girls' School one lone little Christian girl was acquiring Hebrew for the same purpose.

I have met Dr. Ruppin and other notables, and have found some very nice people. I have been entertained in homes in a manner not surpassed by any of our friends in Baltimore.

We have not yet landed our cargo, and now I can see that the boat will go back to Beirut to coal the "North Carolina" without unloading. Preliminaries have not yet been arranged, and the battleship needs coal. We hope that by the time she returns we shall be in a position to unload.

Tomorrow morning I shall proceed with the American consul by carriage to Jerusalem. Perhaps there we shall be able to make the necessary arrangements. I expect to return in the next few days, ready for unloading our supplies. Meanwhile I shall face the music in the Holy City, where, I am told, owing to the lack of income from Galicia and Russia, the Halukkah people are in special want. . . . There can be no doubt of the great poverty. I hope we shall be able to help it a little.

Dr. Glazebrook, our Consul in Jerusalem, is ever ready to help us, and we feel that he is doing all that he can. We could not have a man more desirous of being of service. This fact ought to be made known.

Jaffa, May 5, 1915. . . . We are just beginning to unload the ship—it took a long time to arrive at this point. . . . The country looks beautiful, and the evenings are charming. Things are very quiet, as one can well imagine. . . . One cannot be here long without coming to the conclusion that this is the land of the Bible. We see many things that must have been the same as they are now several thousand years ago. The camel, the ass, the tent, the flock, and the well still figure largely in the life and the landscape. And the gardens of the colonists show that this country can indeed be made to be a land flowing with milk and honey. . . . I saw Rishon le-Zion for a few minutes Friday, and I spent Saturday in Rehobot. I found it a beautifully situated colony, and one in which much hard and intelligent work has been done; but what with the locusts and the present interruption to business, one does not know what will become of it. One thing can be said—the land can be made to yield wonderful crops. And the climate is delightful.

(Upon his return to America Mr. Levin was interviewed and made the following remarks:) The condition of the Jews in Palestine is extremely bad. There is very little food, and what there is can be bought only at prohibitive prices. . . . To add to the critical situation the locusts have destroyed practically all this year's crop.

. . . We encountered considerable difficulty in securing means for the transportation of the supplies we had brought. About the only means of transportation were camels, and these could not be secured in sufficient numbers to carry on our relief work with the speed desired.

The food we brought with us furnished only temporary relief, and unless more is sent, the thousands of destitute families there face starvation. . . . The people are without funds, and some lack even the humblest kind of abode in which to live. Many have sought to escape starvation by fleeing to Alexandria, where two American war vessels and a number of Italian freight steamers have been taking them.

THE JUDAEAN COLONIES AND THE WAR CRISIS

BY W. GLUSKIN

In order to realize the full effect of the war upon our colonies in Judaea, and to appreciate the valiant resistance to the war crisis on the part of the colonies, it is well to recall briefly the situation of the New Yishub in Judaea prior to the war.

Materially, the older colonists had achieved, during the last years preceding the war, a degree of well-being and independence unprecedented in the annals of Palestinian colonization. The economic crisis of ten or twelve years ago had become a thing of the past. Released from all philanthropic supervision, the colonists took full charge of their own affairs and succeeded in placing them on a sound foundation.

The orange planters, almost without exception, were very well situated. By co-operating for the sale of their products, after the manner of the vine growers, through the Pardess and Mercas Associations, they managed to obtain good prices for their oranges, thereby securing a good income for themselves and improving the value of their possessions.

The vine growers of Rishon le-Zion, Rehobot, Vadi el-Hanin, Petah-Tikvah, Gadrah, and Zichron-Jacob organized themselves long ago into the Winegrowers' Co-operative Association, otherwise known as the Wine Syndicate. They make their wines and cognacs in common in the cellars placed at the disposal of the Association by Baron Edmond de Rothschild, and they



THE WINE CELLARS IN RISHON LE-ZION

dispose of their products in all parts of the world, mostly through stores and agencies of their own. The management of the cellars and the entire wine business is in the hands of an Executive Board elected by the annual meeting of the Association, at which every member has a vote. The colonists, through the Association, either own or control all their important selling agencies, as the Carmel Wine Co. in America, the Société Carmel in Russia, the Palestine Wine and Trading Co. in London, and the Carmel Oriental in Turkey and Egypt. The offices and stores of the Association employ colonists by preference. Thus the winegrowers have been getting the full benefit

of their products, and this has been of great help to them in making their economic condition entirely secure.

The almond growers also had little to complain of. They had no difficulty in disposing of their products at good prices, mostly through the Carmel agencies. Of late, they too began to organize for the co-operative management of their business affairs. This branch of our plantations is developing rapidly, many new trees having been planted during the last years, and it is undoubtedly destined to become an important factor in the colonization of Palestine.

Our agricultural colonies were still experiencing a certain degree of want. Although their crops of wheat, barley, and other grain were good, they had to struggle hard for their existence because of heavy government taxes. Gradually, however, their condition has improved somewhat by the introduction of mixed farming, these colonies having added various plantations to their grain fields.

Simultaneously with the economic rise of the colonies, their social and spiritual life developed wonderfully under the beneficent influence of the commercial and educational facilities created by the Zionist institutions and activities. Good elementary schools, libraries, study circles and lecture courses in the colonies, as well as high schools, periodicals, and an intense intellectual life in the nearby cities have been conducive to making life everywhere in Judaea pleasant and interesting.

Peaceful life in the colonies was further assured by their democratic communal organization. All male and female residents who have reached the age of twenty

share equally in the annual direct elections of the Vaad ha-Moshavah (Council of the Colony). The Vaad directs the cultural and hygienic affairs of the colony, treats with the Turkish officials, and arbitrates disputes between the colonists themselves. A distinct Vaad, composed of delegates from the Councils of the various colonies, with headquarters at Rishon le-Zion, attends to general matters in which all the colonies are concerned.

The rapid progress in all directions of the modern Yishub did not fail to attract many new settlers with new colonizing schemes. Jewish tourists began to visit Palestine in large numbers and were agreeably surprised at what they saw. Thus many Jews of wealth became interested in the further regeneration of the country. The desire to acquire land and found new settlements has grown to an appreciable extent among Jews both in Europe and in America. New industrial enterprises followed one another, and wherever the eye turned it beheld feverish activity and vigorous life pulsating courageously and hopefully.

And into the midst of all this happiness crashed the dreadful war.

The crippling of shipping facilities at the outbreak of the war and the ultimate blockade of the Syrian ports was the hardest blow to our colonies, which subsist mainly on the export of their products to oversea countries. This has also brought a dearth in certain foodstuffs and commodities which could no longer be imported.

Further hardships have befallen the colonists in the

form of requisitions by the military authorities of horses, vehicles, foodstuffs, petroleum and other commodities.

To intensify the gloom there came the expulsion of Jews who were subjects of the allied powers, the closing of the banks of the Anglo-Palestine Co., the persecution of prominent Zionists—all of which combined to disturb the yet unstable commercial and industrial life of the Yishub and to shake the confidence of the people. A great catastrophe seemed unavoidable.

But here the strong pioneer spirit of the colonists, which defies all obstacles, has asserted itself, and the colonists have given splendid proof of their power of resistance and of their devotion to their land and to their ideals. Firmly resolved to brave all difficulties and dangers they stuck to their posts, not one of them deserting the country.

And the difficulties and dangers grew. During the first war year alone, the annual receipts of 4,000,000 francs from the sale of oranges, wine, and almonds had fallen to one-fourth of this sum because of the blockade. With the approach of the second year a locust plague of unusual magnitude greatly aggravated the situation. For three months the colonists, with their wives and children, and with assistance from the nearby cities, fought this terrible plague; but the locusts did not depart until they had destroyed or seriously damaged all the vines, 90% of the orange trees, and 50% of the almond trees. As a result of this the income of all our planters in Judaea during the second year of the war will hardly reach the insignificant sum of 250,000 francs,

while the repairing of the damaged plantations requires disbursements far above the normal.

The condition of the Jewish laborers is still worse. For lack of cash the colonists are unable to offer them remunerative employment, while they have no savings or resources of their own on which to fall back.

The situation is indeed grave, and it is hard to tell how it would have been met were it not for the assistance sent from America. Thanks to this assistance the National Fund was enabled to give employment to a large number of laborers. Many of them were doubtless assisted by the Palestine Labor Fund of the American Poalei Zion. Some succor was granted them from the general war relief funds as well.

But the colonists ask for no charity. All they need is a loan against the guaranty of their possessions. Our American brethren have attempted to respond to this call, and a considerable part of the required loan has already been transmitted to Palestine. This will save the vineyards and orange groves, and will also create employment for hundreds of our laborers. It is to be hoped that the interest of America in the fate of our brave pioneers will not diminish until they will have recovered from the effects of this crisis.

The time for writing the history of the war crisis in Palestine and of the splendid resistance put up by the entire New Yishub has not yet arrived. May the day soon dawn when the story will be told with joy. It will form one of the most thrilling and brightest chapters in the history of the Jewish renaissance.



THE WAILING WALL

THE DEATH OF THE ORCHARD

BY HEMDA BEN JEHUDA

Her name is Peninnah, and she is as white as a pearl. Her braids are like the golden flax. In her eyes the blue heavens sparkle. Peninnah is the fairest of the maidens of our land, the most delicate and gracious. And all our young men dream of her. She is good and gentle, kind-hearted and noble.

Peninnah cherishes above all things Erez Israel, the land of her fathers; and Hebrew, her mother-tongue, is dearer to her than any other language. She loves Jerusalem, the ancient capital, and all the other towns and villages, and especially the colonies, with their vineyards, their gardens, and their orchards brimming over with oranges and lemons, and scented by the blooming almond-trees.

When Peninnah comes into the orchard the trees stretch out their branches to her, as if every flower and fruit were saying, "Pick me, bear me away with you, and eat me." But Peninnah, with her soft white hand, fondles the golden orange and warms the flowers with her breath, and lends them additional sweetness and fragrance with her kisses.

Peninnah loves every tree and shrub, the blue heavens above her, and the green grass beneath her feet. She loves the ardent rays of the Palestinian sun, and the silvery light of the moon, and the sable darkness of night, with its innumerable twinkling stars. She loves the song of the plowman when he goes to work, the

twittering of the birds, and the mellow sounds of the Hebrew which the mother murmurs to her child; the sturdy, sun-burned youths, the flocks of sheep which return to the colony at sunset, and the far-away tones of the shepherd's lute.

All her life is a happy and beautiful song.

* * *

Woe!

What tumult is this?

Why this clashing of swords, and this roaring of cannons?

War is in the land.

The two pink roses in Peninnah's cheeks have faded. Her lips tremble pitifully. The sky-blue of her eyes is clouded, and the soft tears flow like summer rain. Only the flaxen hair still glistens like a crown of gold about her head.

"Peninnah, my child, calm yourself!" beseeches her mother.

"Apple of my eye, have faith in our future!" says her father encouragingly.

"Peninnah, the daughters of Zion will be protected by her sons!" she hears from all sides.

But Peninnah does not answer. She vanishes and is not to be found. With hurried steps she leaves her home—behold her beyond the hedge of the garden. She glides like a shadow down the road, and is seen no more. From early morning to long after dark she is hard at work. She gathers food for the hungry, dis-

tributes clothing to the poor, cares for the sick, and comforts the needy and unfortunate.

But at daybreak, before the weary people awaken to the cares of the day, Peninnah tries to find consolation. She goes to the fragrant orchard, passes from one tree to another, and rests her cheek on a golden orange, bathed in the dew of morning. She delights in the scarlet glow of the ripe pear, inhales the perfume of the apple, and approaches her lips to the *etrog* as if in prayer. . . . The clang of bayonets, the hideous bloodshed, the unhappy mothers whose sons have left them forever, the helpless old men, the sobbing orphans—Peninnah forgets them all in these moments. A divine smile illumines her countenance as her eyes turn to the water-pipes which run from one plant to another. It would almost seem as if she held secret converse with the trickling of the water.

* * *

The long, long months of the war pass slowly by. Want and suffering are everywhere, and dire poverty is abroad. The icy hand of despair clutches at every heart. The course of daily life is interrupted in our cities and colonies. Even the orchard is neglected. The oranges are not gathered because there are no boats to bear them over the seas, and they cover the ground like a golden carpet. The heavy *etrogim* weigh the branches downward. The almonds darken on the trees for there are no hands to pick them, the apples decay, the grapes dry in the vineyards; even the leaves wither and the trees droop. And the water-pipes are still, because the motors have been removed.

Peninnah stands with bowed head in the orchard, for she knows that it is dying. Her young life surges in her breast like the billows on the ocean, and she moans: "I cannot live, I cannot . . ."

THE INDICTMENT OF ZIONISTS IN PALESTINE

By M. SHEINKIN

The first Zionist to be arrested was Manya Vill-bushevitch, who, with her husband, Israel Shochat, had been instrumental in forming the organization of the shomrim. It seems that this arrest was made in connection with this question. Their names of the shomrim had been found in the books of a Jaffa store-keeper who had sold them firearms. While on trial she was questioned about the aims of the Zionist movement, which she made no attempt to conceal, stating, however, that they were in no way opposed to the interests of Turkey. She did not hesitate to speak her mind freely. "It is unfortunate," she said, "that we have always had to use roundabout methods, and to do our work with the help of 'baksheesh' because the Turkish officials do not serve their country loyally. Now we hope that more wholesome conditions will prevail, for the sake of the work which is useful and necessary both for us and for you."

A few weeks later (about the middle of February, 1915) Djemal Pasha, the commander-in-chief of the Syrian army, ordered that over twenty of the most prominent Zionists should appear before him in Jerusalem: fifteen from Jaffa, (among them the Turkish teacher of the Gymnasia,) five or six from the Judæan colonies, and several from Jerusalem itself. The "guests" were accompanied by hundreds of people, who felt proud, and at the same time rather bitter, as they drove through Tel-Aviv. "Well", said they, "the government is interested in us after all. Up to now they have considered us a mere

group of immigrants, and now we have suddenly become a political faction. But how will this end, or rather what have they up their sleeves?"

Arrived in Jerusalem they were brought directly before Djemal Pasha. He gazed at them sternly and said: "Be in readiness, for in ten days I am going to send you to Constantinople." (The Turkish teacher of the Gymnasia had the temerity to answer him, and was forthwith arrested and sent to Constantinople.)

These people sent a petition to Djemal Pasha that he should receive a delegation of two, explain to them the



DJEMAL PASHA AND HIS FRIENDS

cause of the arrest, and give them an opportunity to plead their cause. He agreed to receive one of them, Antebi. After an hour's audience Djemal Pasha ordered that instead of being sent to Constantinople they should leave Jerusalem for a few weeks. It would have been sufficient for them to go as far as Zichron-Jacob or Hederah, but they went to Haifa and Tiberias.

Ten days later the Jaffa officials "invited" seven other Zionists. It may have been nothing but a coincidence, but these seven had been delegates from Palestine to the last Congress. On this occasion I also was honored by an invitation. We were brought back to Tel-Aviv escorted by a number of military and civil officials. The gendarmes were there to receive us. Each one of us was taken to his home, which was thoroughly searched. All papers and documents, as well as brochures and pictures which seemed to have any relation to the Zionist movement were confiscated, and we were removed to the military headquarters.

All the inhabitants of Tel-Aviv were filled with terror. They thought that we would be led to the scaffold that very day. We were told afterwards that hundreds of the working-people were on the point of going to the officials and declaring that they too were culpable of whatever crime we were to be punished for. Soon the news of these events was telegraphed to Constantinople as well as to foreign countries. Those of us who had been arrested were meanwhile peacefully sitting under lock and key in the military prison. Several hours later we were taken to the waiting room, where we were allowed

to see our friends. At night they moved us to the French Hospital, where we were given a large hall, with clean, soft beds and the best of service. (One of our number had been left in his home in Tel-Aviv by mistake. Suddenly, late at night, the officials remembered his existence, and had him brought to the Hospital.)

Every morning and evening we underwent a thorough cross-examination. At first they tried to worm our "secrets" out of us by threats, and to make us confess who were the leaders of our movement in Palestine. We answered proudly that they had no reason to suspect us, that we had no secrets, and that furthermore we ourselves were the leaders of the Zionist movement. They finally asked us to produce the flag of the Hebrew Gymnasia. They had found the photograph of a number of pupils grouped under a flag bearing a Hebrew inscription. This picture had been taken at the time when they had only a pennant at the Gymnasia. But Dr. Mossinsohn, the Director, was forced to go there in the middle of the night and look up an old, torn pennant with an inscription. The prosecutor realized that he had not made any discoveries, and that there were no dangerous plots to be found in the documents.

A few days later we were ordered to go to Jerusalem, where our trial was to be continued. We went to the station guarded by a gendarme and accompanied by our families and hundreds of our Jews. The pupils of the Gymnasia and all the inhabitants of Tel-Aviv saluted the train as it went by. Arrived in Jerusalem the gendarme took us to police headquarters, for which action

he was severely reprimanded. We were told to go to the hotel, and there to hold ourselves in readiness to be summoned to a cross-examination. But we had enough time to play chess, to study Arabic, to pay visits and receive them, and even to attend Zionist as well as other meetings.

Each day one or two of us were summoned to a cross-examination which usually lasted about an hour. We gave the prosecutor a complete course in the history of Zionism, the Congresses, and all our institutions, such as the Geulah and Tel-Aviv. The interpreter, who translated from Turkish to Hebrew and vice-versa, was a Jew. Our straightforwardness, our serenity and fearlessness seemed to have made an excellent impression on the prosecutor. After a ten days' stay in Jerusalem we were freed and allowed to go home to Jaffa. As the prosecutor had not found any evidence against us he gave us back all the papers which had been confiscated. But nevertheless he said that he was convinced that Zionism was harmful to the Turkish Empire, and that he would report his opinion in Constantinople. On the other hand it is a fact that Djemal Pasha, who had just returned from the Suez expedition, received a telegram from Constantinople telling him not to persecute us because of our Zionist tendencies.

During our detention in Jerusalem two of the Poalei Zion, Ben-Zwi and Ben-Gourion, had been arrested. These men issued a statement describing the work of their organization, and were liberated. Djemal Pasha, however, absolutely refused to free Manya Villbushevitch and her husband, as well as Mr. Hankin. These two men had been

“invited” with the first group of “guests”, but had arrived after Djemal Pasha had left for Suez. It was understood that they were merely to await his return, but nevertheless they continued to be held under arrest. A young Zionist of Jerusalem, the director of the Bet-Am, Mr. Lomer, was also imprisoned. A few weeks after we had been released, Djemal Pasha ordered that Manya Villbushevitch, her husband, and Mr. Hankin should be sent to Constantinople. (Manya Villbushevitch had already on a former occasion appeared before a military tribunal in Damascus and had been found guilty.)

At about the same time, Dr. Mossinsohn, the above-mentioned Poalei Zion, and Mr. Lomer were banished from the country. This followed closely on Djemal Pasha’s visit to Tel-Aviv, where he had had a friendly talk with the Zionist leaders in the Gymnasia. He had sent a proclamation by telegram through all Syria stating that he was convinced of the loyalty of the Jews, and that anyone who spread unfavorable reports about the Jews would be severely punished.

We had believed that this would put an end to the persecutions of the Zionist leaders. But suddenly, in the month of May, 1915, a mandate was issued by Djemal Pasha that fifty Jews, the directors of various institutions and organizations, should not be allowed to become Turkish subjects, and should consequently be banished from the country as Russian subjects. Now a second petition was sent to Djemal Pasha. He consented to let the old people remain, and was later persuaded to extend his clemency to the teachers, (with the exception of the

chairman of the teachers' league, Dr. Luria,) and the members of the Vaad of Tel-Aviv, as well as to several men who had made use of private intercession. The decree remained in force in the case of ten people. It is possible that with the help of further intercession they also might have been allowed to remain. But at that time a hundred fifty of the most prominent Arabs were accused of treason and subsequently hanged. After this it seemed unwise to continue to intercede in behalf of ten Zionists who were moreover subjects of a hostile power.

And so several of these ten Zionists left the country. The others employed "underhand" methods; whenever a boat was to leave Jaffa they were not to be found at home and the police did not attempt to discover their whereabouts. Toward the end of August Djemal Pasha ordered that we should be kept under arrest until a boat should arrive. We were confined in a house in Tel-Aviv under police supervision. They allowed us to go home three times a day for our meals, and also to receive visitors. News came from Constantinople that we were not to be banished after all. We would have been able to arrange that no American ship should land in Jaffa until we had been freed; but there were several hundred Jews in Jaffa who were not willing to become Turkish subjects, and were anxious to leave Palestine. They were arrested and treated much more severely than we were, having to put up with poor and unhygienic quarters. These people reproached us bitterly because, as they said, it was our fault that they were compelled to suffer. In consequence we ourselves had to request that an American

boat should land in Jaffa. (August 20, 1915.) It was not until we, the banished Zionists, had boarded the ship, that these other people were allowed to leave.

These, then, are the facts. It is hard to distinguish between tragic and comic, between kindness, inconsistency, and tyranny. One thing must be said: if the Jews had been implicated in a similar affair in any "civilized" country which was at war, not one of them would be alive to write an article about it. Perhaps this would be in accord with logic and discipline; perhaps it would be a good thing for Zionism, as the names of the martyrs would go down in history. But what shall we do? Turkey is Turkey, and its methods are unique.

THE SHOMER

BY MORDECAI BERNSTEIN

Galilee.

A still and limpid sea. A deep blue sky. Moonlight nights, pale and soft, quivering with dreams and longing. Springs, bubbling unvaryingly and drowsily. Wide, wide green fields, rejoicing the eye. A childlike and innocent smile. Peace, everywhere peace.

Galilee.

Lofty hills piercing the rolling clouds, shadowy and mysterious caverns, awe-inspiring rocks, gray and dismal. A burning sun, heating the blood. Dark nights, filled with ominous gusts of wind, and the yelping of the jackal. Whistling storms, uprooting the very rocks. Wild kicking mules. Eyes that shoot darts of green hell-fire. Strife, everywhere strife.

The angel of peace has spread his gleaming wings over the fruitful valleys, bathed in sunlight, the valleys of Galilee. And the spirit of war has fortified his stronghold in the midst of the proud mountains, the mountains looming black against the crimson sunset, the mountains of Galilee.

Once in Galilee there was born a great Jew, pale and bloodless, dreaming dreams of universal peace. In Galilee, too, the ardent Zealot came into being, trumpet-ing forth a battle-cry to his people.

In Galilee the Fellah plows his field idly and indolently,

humming a plaintive and monotonous song, while a huge camel with a hoary mane drags his wooden plow slowly forward. In Galilee the Fellah furrows the rich soil with a primitive plow—a sharp stick—to which his wife and his ass are harnessed. The Arab is simple and good-natured. He loves his wife and he loves his ass, and he apportions the strokes of his long whip impartially to right and to left.

And in Galilee too a band of prowling robbers wander by night on their black horses in the impenetrable shadows of the mountains, and lurk near the roads and the narrow paths. And the witches and the spirits dancing in an eerie revel, leap madly from summit to summit over the yawning chasms, and slink away to the hidden clefts of the rocks when the stars begin to pale.

* * *

The true Palestinian farmer—not the merchant who has his fields cultivated by Arabs and employs one Jewish workman as a sort of talisman—the one who is a broad-shouldered, sunburnt man, with toilworn hands, who labors together with his family the portion which the Lord has given him, who is heedless of the penetrating winter rains, or the mountain storms, or the burning heat of the summer noon,—he is a child of Galilee.

The true Palestinian workman—not the cynic who works in bitterness and discontent with himself and his brother—the one who is a visionary, who gives himself with reverent love to the all-absorbing task of regaining

the Land of Israel by the sweat of his brow, who maintains his unshaken confidence in a national resurrection, who revives the ancient songs of his people, and straightens his bent form in a joyous dance,—he is a child of Galilee.

And the ardent shomer who shields the land with his body, and clutches it in talons of steel, who gives his life before relinquishing his prize, the shomer whose smile is as serene as Kinneret and whose anger is like a raging torrent, who gallops till his savage horse is covered with froth, who loves with a fiery love and hates with a steely hate, who wounds and kills, and dances in mad abandon to his death,—he too is a child of Galilee.

The men of peace and the men of strife—they are all children of Galilee!

* * *

I met him in the Yeshibah, a tall and careworn youth, bent by the weight of the massive volumes of the Talmud, his eyes glued to the ground, glancing apprehensively at his very shadow, trembling at the hoarse bark of the slinking cur, fleeing from the coarse gibes of the taunting *shegetz*.

I met him again in Sedjera, proud and erect of figure, keen of eye, easy of movement, full of confidence in himself. His brawny hand stroked the mane of his prancing horse. I recognized a Hebrew shomer.

Such is the miraculous power of the land, of the feeling “this is mine”. Are thirty years enough to transfigure the aspect of a generation? Are thirty years enough to

cleanse the soul from the dust that has lain on it for two thousand years? Are thirty years enough to weave a young and vigorous body around a quickened and regenerated soul?

Yes! Look at the shomer.

* * *

"The Jews are a timorous people." These words have been drummed into our ears for hundreds of years. They say that we are a people without order or system, a people lacking in discipline. How humiliating have been the ignoble gibes, the vicious sneers! The murmur of the multitudes has penetrated into our unwilling ears and reached to our innermost souls. And it has become so much a part of us that, sometimes, when it ceases for a moment, we with our own lips whisper it to one another.

But is it true? See, for only thirty years the Jews have inhaled the pure air of their own land, for only thirty years they have tilled the soil which they claim in the face of all the world as theirs and theirs only. And the shomer came into being. Did you meet, in your wanderings through the world, men who know no fear, men with staunch hearts and great souls who have given themselves wholly to an overmastering idea, men who achieve immortality in a single moment? If you have met such men, it must have been in Erez Israel. You must have seen the Jewish guardians of a Jewish land.

Discipline? No punishment by death threatens them, nor any chastisement other than the repeal of the glorious title of Jewish shomer. Did the head of the shomrim

ever give a command which his subordinates did not carry out to the letter, even though they did not perceive any reason for it, and even though this command sent them to meet certain death? Is this not perfect discipline, blind obedience?

And order? The whole land was guarded by only three hundred shomrim. And yet, whatever colony you passed through, you saw the shomrim; on the roads and the paths you came upon them; shomrim on the mountains, shomrim in the valleys, shomrim behind the thorny cactus, shomrim near the poor huts, shomrim dancing at festivals and weddings. But they say that the shomrim sleep soundly all the day! Is this not a sign of consummate order, of iron system?

* * *

I asked many shomrim who was the first to conceive the idea of the shomer. And every one answered that he himself had been its originator. And what is more, I inquired among the working men who had been in Palestine for a long time, in the hope of getting at the truth. And how astonished I was to find that every one proved to me by undeniable facts that he himself had been the first to declare that none but Jews should protect the Jewish land.

Who created the shomer? Nobody and everybody. And only because the shomer is a creation of the whole people has he been enabled to spread his wings over the whole land in so short a time. And yet, only eight

years ago the organization of shomrim consisted of one man, the shomer in Sedjera.

Such is the miraculous power of the soil. A single grain is planted, and soon a tiny sprout grows into a flourishing plant, which bears hundreds and hundreds of grains.

And you stand and wonder. Whence came all this abundance? Could it have come from one solitary grain?

And whence came the shomer?

The shomer demonstrates to the whole world as well as to us what we are. He reveals to us the true soul of the nation, proud and aristocratic, which was hidden by the dust of the unending roads and paths on which we wandered for centuries. He reveals the image of manhood on the face of the Jew, the Jew who belongs to all times and all countries. But the shomer is only one of the symbols of the regeneration. And the others? . . .

Such is the miraculous power of the soil.

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